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interesting to some of your readers to consult this Review. As the work at the Athenæum is a second edition, it is probable, that these absurd accounts of American characters were not contained in the Leipsic edition, or they would have been noticed by Mr. Walsh; if the article was written by him. It is rendering a publick service to denounce books of this kind. What idea would be formed by a German of some of the most eminent characters in our country from perusing such a work. If a correspondence could be established between literary men of different countries, some check might be given to the circulation of calumny, by instantly denouncing to each other, every work that should contain it.

P. O.

#### FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN JOURNAL.

There have been lately received at the Athenæum, the transactions of the French Institute for the years 1813 and 1814, of which we will attempt to give a slight account. The analysis of the labours of the class of the mathematical and physical class is made by *M. Delambre*. It commences by noticing the publication of *la mécanique analytique* of the *Count de Lagrange*, whose death happened while the second volume was printing. The great loss sustained by science in this event is deplored, and the hope encouraged that the influence of his writings will raise up others to complete them. This hope is justified by an allusion to one of the first works of Lagrange, the calculation of *probabilities*, on which the last year a perfect treatise had been given by the *Count de la Place*; and who has lately applied his theory to one of the most difficult questions suggested by physical astronomy; the origin of comets and the nature of their orbits. Some account of this paper then follows. Its hypothesis is founded on a suggestion of Herschel relative to the origin of comets, which resembles much the doctrine of the ancients on this subject; and which *M. Delambre* thinks will tend to diminish greatly the importance of these bodies, if it should prove to be well founded. The next paper mentioned is a memoir of *M. Burckhardt* on the masses of the planets, and another of the same, on some of the equations in the theory of Jupiter; these are followed by an abstract of a second memoir by *M. Poisson* of the distribution of elec-

tricity on the surface of conducting bodies. Notice of the new memoirs of *M. Biot* on the polarization of light, is given next. A portable Barometer on a new construction by *M. Gay Lussac* is described, and mention of a description read to the class by Count Rumford of a thermometer, to measure the specifick heat of solids and liquids. The analysis concludes with a list of the books and memoirs presented to the class, and some remarks upon them. The analysis for 1814 by the same author, commences with an abstract of some memoirs of *M. Biot*, under the following heads ; New application of the theory of the oscillations of light ; On the physical properties which luminous molecules acquire in traversing cristals of double refraction ; Discovery of a physical difference in the nature of the polarizing powers of certain cristals ; on a particular species of polarization which is observed in the Tourmaline. Then follows the result of certain meteorological operations by *Baron Ramond*. The next is an abstract of a memoir by *M. Poisson* on elastick surfaces. A memoir of *Laplace* on the probability of testimonies, intended to complete his analytical theory of probabilities is briefly mentioned. Tables of *M. Burckhardt* for the parabolick movement of comets, an account of an antique vase by *M. Monger*, a memoir by *Count Andreossi*, on the Bosphorus of Thrace follow. These are succeeded by an interesting dissertation of *Delambre's* on a dial found at Delos and on the gnomonicks of the ancients. The paper terminates as usual, with an account of the printed books and memoirs presented to the class.

The department of Physicks is by *M. Cuvier* ; the analysis for 1813, commences with several experiments on the congelation of water, by different chemists, in consequence of the discoveries of Leslie, this is followed by an account of some experiments of the various degrees of heat possessed by the rays of light when dissected by the prism. Mention is made of some experiments upon alcohol to decide upon the manner of its formation. An account of the effects of a combination of azote and chlorine, by *M. Dulong*, which produces a fulminating oil, and a preparation extremely dangerous. This chemist lost one eye and his life nearly, in the experiments, which had also been nearly fatal before to Sir H. Davy. The class therefore advised

him to pursue it no further. Another fulminating powder from different materials had been accidentally discovered, and was supposed to have a strong analogy to the last. *Vauquelin* found all the qualities of *ultramarine*, in a substance which had been found in taking to pieces a furnace constructed of particular materials, and this had occasioned a hope that a new mode might be produced of obtaining this precious colour. Some very curious experiments, in analyzing platina, had been made by *Vauquelin*. A short mention is made of a new elementary treatise of chemistry by *Thenard*, accommodated to the present state of the science. The progress of mineralogy and geology is described, and the accurate investigations that have been made in the environs of Paris by *Cuvier* and *Brogniart*, and also some new works now in progress by the latter, particularly a general treatise of geology. Under the head of vegetable and botanical physiology, some ingenious observations and discoveries of several botanists are given, and mention of two new works, one of *M. Delille* on the wild and cultivated plants of Egypt, which is to form part of the great work on that country; and an abridged history of the plants of the Pyrenees by *M. de la Peyrouse*. The recent labours of *Cuvier*, *Huber*, *Olivier* and others in zoology, animal physiology and anatomy, follow, and some account of fishes, and interesting and minute investigation of various insects given. The paper terminates with the department of the Medicine and Surgery. A memoir of *M. Chambon* on the danger encountered by anatomists in their dissections; a work by a young Spanish physician, *M. Orfila*, on poisons considered medically and juridically; some remarkable cases by *M. Pictet*. A new work of *M. Portal* on the diseases of the liver, and of *M. Tenon* on the means of prolonging life and enjoying health in old age, are the works noticed.

The analysis for 1814, by the same, commences with some just and neat compliments to the allied Sovereigns and their followers, on the protection and respect they shewed to the sciences and the museums of the arts and sciences during their visit to Paris, in that year. He remarks that 'the grand crusade was in part undertaken to 're-establish the liberty of thinking and writing;' and expresses strong hopes that science will be cultivated with

increased ardour and success for the future. His report commences with chemistry, and narrates the experiments of Berthollet, Davy, and others upon *iode* 'one of the most 'curious substances of recent discoveries;'—and then follows the account of further investigations of alcohol. *M. Pelletier* had communicated some experiments on the colouring matters obtained from sandal wood and *orcanete*. *M. Vanquelin's* further experiments on platina and its component minerals are detailed. *M. Monger* had read a memoir on the bronze of the ancients; it had been discovered that bronze was not like steel hardened by immersion in water when heated; but on the contrary left to cool slowly in the air: in consequence of this *M. Darcel* had succeeded in making cymbals, the secret of which was said to be known to only one workman in Constantinople, from whence all these instruments were obtained. Mineralogy and Geology come next; some remarks on the fall of stones, and examination of their composition, are first given. *M. Cuvier* then speaks of the skeleton which was found about a century ago in a quarry in Switzerland, which had been thought to be that of a man, and had been placed in a museum, with this inscription, *a man witness of the deluge*. *M. Cuvier* having obtained leave to remove more of the stone in which it was enveloped, found that it was the skeleton, as he before supposed from seeing a drawing of it, of a salamander. He had discovered also in the Gypsum of Montmartre a fossil head of an extinct species of animal, which he has called *Palaeotherium medium*. *M. Humbolt's* history of the volcano of Jorullo is mentioned. In this as in most other scenes of nature, South America has rendered those of every other region almost insignificant in comparison. The labours of Botany are next related, and many dissertations of different botanists noticed. In the department of Anatomy and Zoology, several minute discoveries, in the construction of certain insects, and two papers on different parts of the human body are detailed. In Medicine and Surgery some strong recommendations of the English practice of amputation are given, particularly by *M. Percy*, who said he could speak of its good effects having 'had the sad advantage to perform more operations of 'this kind than perhaps any surgeon who ever existed.' A further account is given of the work on poisons, by *M. Or-*

fila, mentioned in the analysis of 1813. The paper concludes with what had been done in Agriculture and the Veterinary art.

The 'notice of the labours of the class of the fine arts for '1814,' is given by *M. Le Breton*. An account is rendered of several pieces of Musick, of several performances in painting, sculpture and architecture, by the students who are pensioners of the government at Rome. A general account also is given of the progress of the arts in Paris, and various publications, French and foreign, connected with the Fine Arts. At the close is a list of the prizes in painting, architecture, sculpture and engraving, and of the artists who had obtained them. Among these is one for a library with several apartments attached to it, for purposes of the arts, and cabinets of natural history, which was to be erected somewhere in the south of France; as this is an establishment which we are in the most urgent want of here, and as there is some hope that we may soon obtain an edifice of this kind, it might be expedient to obtain copies of these plans, of which there were three that received prizes.

The report of the labours of the class of history and ancient literature, is made by *M. Daunou*. The best idea that can be given of these, in our brief limits, is the marginal notes which contain the titles of the memoirs which are as follow. 'Observations of *M. Gail* on a text of Demosthenes relative to the topography of Athens. Memoir of *M. Gail* on the geography of the environs of the Euripas, and on the expedition of Diitrephes against Mycalessa. Researches about the place called Hermaion in Thucydides by *M. Caussin*. Observations of *M. Gail* on the sense of certain Greek words, and on the Hermæum of Livy. A second memoir of *M. Caussin* on the position of Hermaion or Hermæum. *M. Gail* and *M. Caussin* on the meaning of certain Greek words. Researches of *M. Gail* on the battle of Platea. Geographical researches by *M. Gail* respecting Thrace, Macedonia, Thessalia, Epithrace and Illyria. Memoir of *M. Gail* on this question, Is the 8th book of Thucydides genuine? Memoir of *M. Amauri Duval* upon an Italian dissertation which tended to prove that there existed a town called Naples in the

ancient Peucetian Apulia. Memoir of *M. Valcnaer* on a portion of the ancient Appian way. Researches by *M. Valcnaer* on a Roman way recently discovered between Sens and Coulommiers. Researches by the same on the ancient itineraries of Persia and India, and on the marches of Alexander and Seleucus Nicator. A memoir on the subject of the Caspian gates. Remarks, by the same, on the denomination of Caspian, Caucasian and Sarmatian gates given to different defiles of Caucasus. Memoir of *M. Faucis de Saint Vincent* on the places in Provence where the Cimbri were vanquished by Marius. Letter of *M. Fauvel* from Athens giving an account of some new researches in that neighbourhood. The Journal of *M. Fourcade* in Bosnia. Memoirs on some charts of the middle ages, particularly those of Marino Saluto, and of Marco Polo which are in the hall *dello scudo* at Venice, by *M. Baillon*. Memoir of *M. Monger* on the exterior tunick. Memoir by the same on the bronze of the ancients. Notice of painted vases ; observations on a medal of the city of Siris ; on the sepulchral monuments of Campanus, etc. by *M. Millin*. Memoir of the *Count de la Borde* on the three monuments relative to the history of Orestes. Memoir of the same on Arabian architecture. On the influence of Christianity in the abolition of slavery, by *Count Gregoire*. On the influence of Christianity on the condition of women, by the same. Memoir of *M. Clavier* on the question, whether the ancients punished or tolerated abortion ? Memoir of *M. Boissonade* on the same question. Memoir by the same on the letters of Crates the Cynick. Memoir of *M. Bernardi* on Galerius Trachalus. Memoir on the arrival of Frigga Fridulfson or Odin in Scandinavia by *M. Graber of Hemso*. Examination of the systems relative to the origin of the Russians, by *M. Daunou*. Answer of *M. Petit Radet* to the preceding memoir. Memoir of Baron *de Sacy* on a treaty between the Genoeze of Pera and the Prince of the Bulgarians. Memoir of Count *Lanjuinais* on the Latin Supines. Notice of the life of Machiavel, serving as an introduction to the examination of his works, by *M. Guinguene*.